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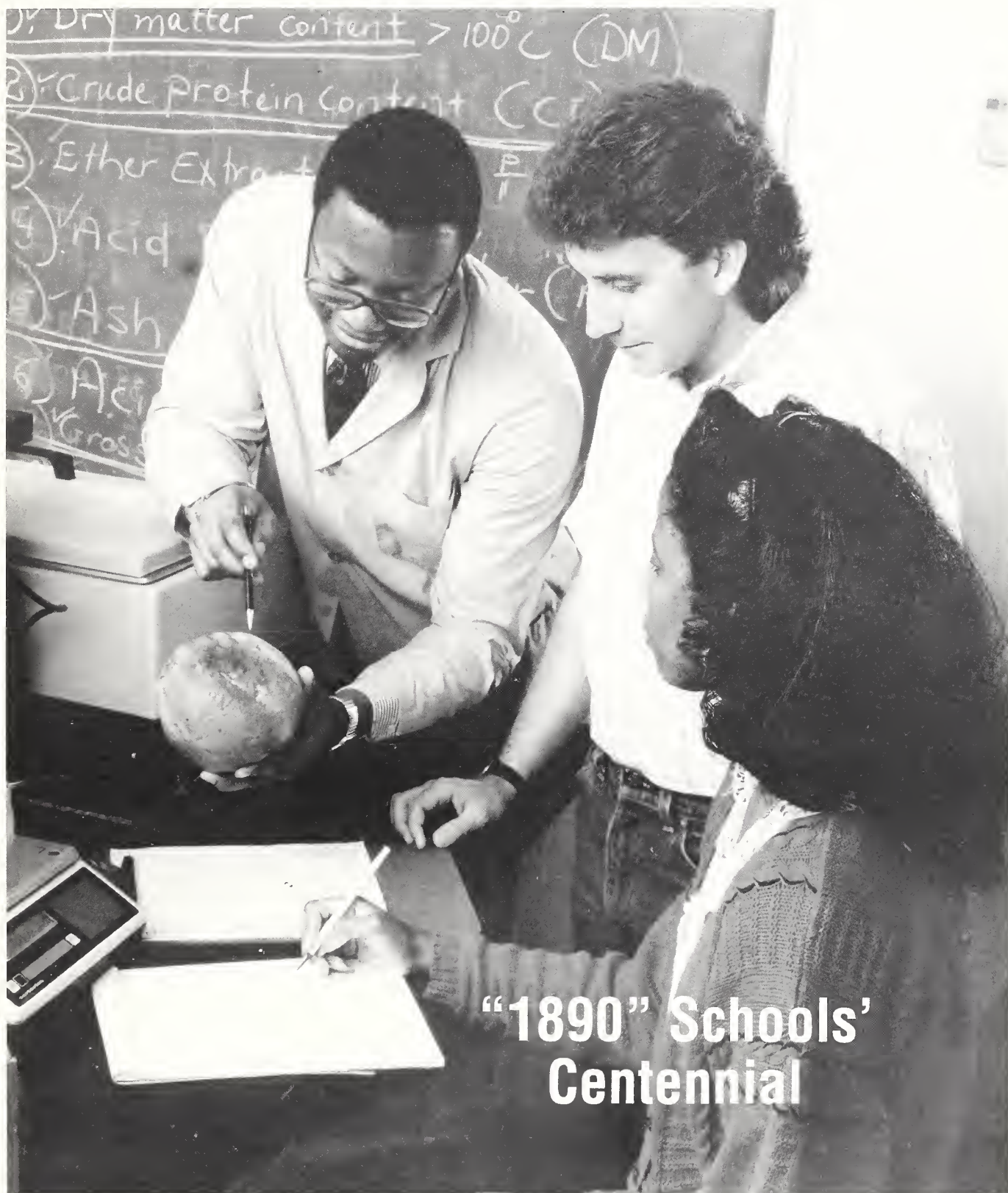
and **Soil Water Conservation**

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Soil
Conservation
Service

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**"1890" Schools'
Centennial**

Cover: A Fort Valley State College faculty member shows students characteristics of papaya, one of many alternative crops that school researchers are studying. Fort Valley, in Georgia, is one of the historically black land-grant colleges. (Photo by FVSC School of Agriculture, Home Economics, and Allied Programs.)

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Comments from the SCS Chief:

SCS and the 1890 Institutions and Tuskegee University

This year is the centennial of the group of historically black, primarily southern colleges known as the 1890 Institutions and Tuskegee University. SCS joins in congratulating them for their 100 years of progress through teaching and research.

These schools were established through the second Morrill Act, enacted by Congress in 1890.

SCS began a long and mutually productive association with these universities in the 1940's. Over the years, they have provided us with many outstanding employees who now occupy top positions in the agency. These include district and area conservationists, State conservationists, division directors, and the assistant chief for the Midwest, Sherm Lewis, a graduate of Langston University.

The "1890" colleges have also been instrumental in providing information on how to best communicate with limited-resource and minority farmers on various programs affecting them. This has been of great help to SCS in achieving our goal of equitable assistance to all our clientele.

To assist in recruiting top graduates for SCS jobs, SCS has recently assigned interested staff as liaisons to these colleges.

With this special issue of *Soil and Water Conservation News*, we salute our partners at the 1890 Institutions and Tuskegee University in this, their centennial year. We thank them for a job well done, and look forward to continuing this relationship in the next century of American agriculture.



"1890" Schools:

Agriculture At Core of Land-Grant Education

THE "FATHER" of the land-grant philosophy was Justin Smith Morrill. His philosophy helped establish 17 U.S. colleges and universities to serve minority youth in the East, South, and Midwest, and in Texas. His vision of nearly 130 years ago is still their foundation today:

- To educate in such practical professions as agriculture, home economics, and mechanical arts;
- To accomplish top-quality, scientific research towards goals of progress and productivity; and
- To serve, with education and research, today's people working on tomorrow's needs.

Programs and activities are underway this year to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the education and research origins at these 1890 Institutions and Tuskegee University. (See p. 16.)

The Soil Conservation Service works actively through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Cooperative State Research Service to assist these 17 schools in focusing research on assisting limited-resource, small-

scale, and/or minority farmers and ranchers. SCS also provides technical assistance to these producers.

The first Morrill Act, enacted in 1862, authorized each State to establish a land-grant institution. It would focus on teaching and extension. But not all citizens benefited at first.

Legal separation of races in the South at that time prevented minorities from attending some of the schools. The act authorized such States to set up twin schools as "separate but equal," but only Mississippi and Kentucky did so. And only Alcorn State University, in Mississippi, was designated a land-grant institution.

Between 1866 and 1890, several Southern States established

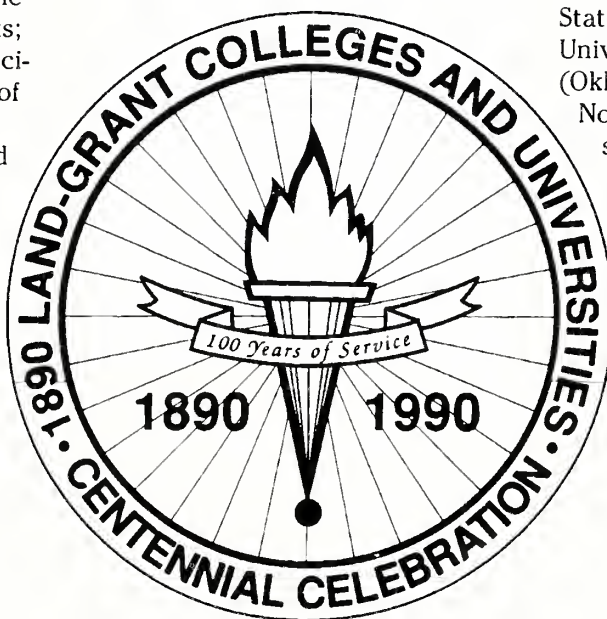
schools to train black teachers. Unfortunately, officials in the South felt these schools to be too similar to land-grant institutions and would not confer land-grant support.

The second Morrill Act, enacted in 1890, allowed historically black institutions to be incorporated into the land-grant system. Many of these schools became land-grant schools.

All told, 17 States in the East, South, and Midwest established black land-grant institutions; 16 retain their land-grant status. Even today these schools are still collectively called the 1890 Institutions and Tuskegee University.

They are: Alabama A&M University; Alcorn State University (Miss.); Delaware State College; Florida A&M University; Fort Valley State College (Ga.); Kentucky State University; Langston University (Okla.); Lincoln University (Mo.); North Carolina A&T State University; Prairie View A&M University (Tex.); South Carolina State College; Southern University and A&M College (La.); Tennessee State University; University of Arkansas—Pine Bluff; University of Maryland—Eastern Shore; and Virginia State University.

Alabama's Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institution, established in 1881, was granted independent status by the State in 1893. Today, Tuskegee University remains independent and is governed by a board of trustees. Tuskegee has al-



A Century of Progress Through Teaching, Research and Extension

A Century of Teaching,



During Career Days, SCS visits "1890" schools to recruit prospective employees. "Mel" Goldsborough, SCS special examining unit head at national headquarters, talks to Southern University students at the Baton Rouge, La., campus. (SCS photo.)

ways espoused the land-grant philosophy and been associated with black land-grant institutions.

Let us look at the 1890 Institutions and Tuskegee University. Where are they located? What are their programs? What are their strengths and research capacities? (See pp. 6-7.)

From their beginning, these 17 schools evolved into one of the major educational resources for the Nation. Over the past century, they have provided a principal means to higher education for black men and women.

Their programs today are available to all persons regardless of race, sex, creed, or socioeconomic status, but they still enroll pre-

NOTE: Land-grant meant Federal acreage would be available for the site, and partial research funding would be available from Federal and State sources. Land-grant institutions are Federal- and State-supported, but not all State-supported schools are designated as land-grant.

"1890" Schools Get \$5.5 Million For Teaching, Research

The 1890 Institutions and Tuskegee University will share \$5.5 million from U.S. Department of Agriculture funding this year to build capacity in teaching and research. Also allocated for 1990 are 600 USDA summer student intern positions to these schools.

dominantly minority students. They continue to be a key source of well-educated blacks who render valuable service to their community, professions, the Nation, and the world.

James E. Tatum, technology transfer manager, SCS, Washington, D.C.

SCS, "1890's" Look Ahead

THE SOIL Conservation Service supports research and teaching program initiatives of historically black land-grant schools collectively called the 1890 Institutions and Tuskegee University. Initiatives include:

- Attracting more minority students to food and agricultural sciences;
- Strengthening SCS linkages with "1890" schools, non-1890 schools, and private agricultural groups; and
- Helping "1890" schools become full partners in the Nation's agricultural system.

The 1985 Food Security Act (FSA), 1990 farm bill, and various water quality initiatives call for soil and water conservation actions. SCS is broadening its transfer technology to include faculty of "1890" schools and is preparing:

- Process-based erosion-prediction technologies, such as Water Erosion Prediction Projects and the Wind Erosion Prediction System;
- An improved ephemeral gully erosion model to estimate erosion from branching, ephemeral gullies; and
- Information on how FSA conservation provisions affect limited-resource, small-scale, and/or minority producers.

James E. Tatum, technology transfer manager, SCS, Washington, D.C.

Research, and Extension

USDA and SCS "1890" Contacts

For information, contact these USDA or SCS "1890" Liaisons at:

Alabama A&M University

USDA: Jimmy Reaves, Department of Plant and Soil Science, P.O. Box 1208, Normal, AL 35762.

SCS: Herbert Ross, Department of Plant and Soil Science, P.O. Box 1208, Normal, AL 35762.

Alcorn State University

USDA: Clifton Peters, P.O. Box 1139, Lorman, MS 39096.

SCS: Thomas E. Collins, Federal Building, Suite 1321, 100 West Capitol Street, Jackson, MS 39269.

Delaware State College

USDA: Median (Bill) Vidrine, Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Dover, DE 19901.

Florida A&M University

USDA: Rozier Crew, P.O. Box 338, Tallahassee, FL 32307.

SCS: Darrall Johnson, P.O. Box 20958, Tallahassee, FL 32316.

Fort Valley State College

USDA: Sheila Gillette, School of Agriculture, Fort Valley State College, P.O. Box 4061, Fort Valley, GA 31030.

SCS: Levi Glover, School of Agriculture, Fort Valley State College, P.O. Box 4061, Fort Valley, GA 31030.

Kentucky State University

USDA: Marie Lubeley, Atwood Research Facility, Frankfort, KY 40601.

SCS: Kenneth Overhults, Room 305, 333 Waller Avenue, Lexington, KY 40504.

Langston University

USDA: Marvin Cooks, P.O. Box 846, Langston, OK 73050.

SCS: Jeff Phillippi, 215 Fairgrounds Road, Suite A, Guthrie, OK 73044.

Lincoln University

USDA: Donald Case, 820 Chestnut Street, Jefferson City, MO 65101.

North Carolina A&T State University

USDA: Elvis Graves, Webb Hall, Room 107, 1601 E. Market Street, Greensboro, NC 27411.

SCS: Michael A. Washington, Webb Hall, Room 107, 1601 E. Market Street, Greensboro, NC 27420.

Prairie View A&M University

USDA: Horace Hodge, P.O. Box Drawer B, Prairie View, TX 77446.

SCS: Dennis E. Thomas, Prairie View A&M University, P.O. Box 608, Prairie View, TX 77446.

South Carolina State College

USDA: James Williams, P.O. Box 1892, Orangeburg, SC 29116.

SCS: Brian F. Schmidt, 1835 Assembly Street, Room 550, Columbia, SC 29201.

Southern University

USDA: Randolph Joseph, Jr., College of Agriculture and Home Economics, Southern Branch Post Office, Baton Rouge, LA 70813.

Tennessee State University

USDA: 1890 Liaison Office, P.O. Box 522, Nashville, TN 37209.

Tuskegee University

USDA: Erich F. Hemphill, School of Agriculture and Home Economics, Tuskegee, AL 36088.

University of Arkansas—Pine Bluff

USDA: Robert Cole, P.O. Box 82, Pine Bluff, AR 71601.

SCS: Theodis Bunch, Department of Agriculture, University of Arkansas—Pine Bluff, P.O. Box 108, Pine Bluff, AR 71601.

University of Maryland—Eastern Shore

USDA: Loney Stewart, P.O. Box 1080, Princess Anne, MD 21853.

Virginia State University

USDA: David Smith, P.O. Box 540, Petersburg, VA 23803.

SCS: Barry D. Harris, Virginia Cooperative Extension Service, Virginia State University, P.O. Box 540, Petersburg, VA 23803.

James E. Tatum, technology transfer manager, SCS, Washington, D.C.

Information on 1890 Institutions

Schools	Founded (year)	Students (no.)	Undergraduate and graduate offerings
Alabama A&M University, Normal, Ala.	1875	4,200	Agriculture; art and science; business, education, and technology; environmental science; home economics. Graduate: applied physics.
Alcorn State University, Lorman, Miss.	1871	2,500	Agriculture and applied science; arts and science; business and economics; education; general college for excellence; nursing; psychology. Graduate: agriculture; elementary, secondary education.
Delaware State College, Dover, Del.	1891	2,000	Agriculture and natural resources; business administration; nursing. Graduate: biology; chemistry; curriculum and instruction; physics.
Florida A&M University, Tallahassee, Fla.	1887	5,400	Agriculture; arts and sciences; business; education; engineering; pharmacy. Graduate: architecture; agriculture; applied science; community psychology; pharmaceutical sciences.
Fort Valley State College, Fort Valley, Ga.	1895	2,000	Agribusiness; agricultural economics; computer science; mass communications; ornamental horticulture.
Kentucky State University, Frankfort, Ky.	1886	2,200	Home economics; music; pre-engineering; pre-medicine; pre-veterinary; teacher education.
Langston University, Langston, Okla.	1897	2,800	Agriculture and computer sciences; applied health; applied sciences; business; education and behavior sciences.
Lincoln University, Jefferson City, Mo.	1866	3,100	Administration; agriculture and extension; business; education; history; natural resources; sociology.
North Carolina A&T State University, Greensboro, N.C.	1891	6,500	Agriculture; arts and sciences; business and economics; engineering; industrial education; nursing; technology.
Prairie View A&M University, Prairie View, Tex.	1876	5,600	Agriculture; arts and sciences; business education; engineering; home economics; industrial education; technology.
South Carolina State College, Orangeburg, S.C.	1896	4,400	Business; education; engineering; technology. Graduate: agribusiness; continuing education; education administration; home economics; speech pathology.
Southern University, Baton Rouge, La.	1880	13,600	Agriculture; arts and humanities; business; education; engineering; home economics; law; nursing; public policy; urban affairs.
Tennessee State University, Nashville, Tenn.	1912	7,400	Agriculture; applied health; arts and sciences; business; education; engineering; home economics; nursing; technology. Graduate: agricultural economics and sciences; business education; engineering; plant and animal sciences.
Tuskegee University, Tuskegee, Ala.	1881	3,400	Agriculture; applied health; architecture; arts and sciences; business; education; engineering; home economics. Graduate: aerospace science; chemistry; electronics.
University of Arkansas—Pine Bluff, Pine Bluff, Ark.	1873	3,600	Agriculture; arts and sciences; business and management; education; home economics; technology.
University of Maryland—Eastern Shore, Princess Anne, Md.	1886	1,800	Agriculture; business management; computer science; engineering; hotel and restaurant management; human ecology; physical therapy; technology.
Virginia State University, Petersburg, Va.	1882	4,000	Agriculture; applied sciences; business; education; humanities; social sciences.

and Tuskegee University

Agricultural research strengths	Capacity-building priorities
Community planning; food science and technology; plant and soil science; rural development.	Biotechnology; farming systems; forestry; geographic information systems; human nutrition and health.
Animal science; human nutrition; plant and soil science; rural development; small-scale and limited-resource assistance to farmers.	Crop production; family and community development; farming systems; human nutrition and health; market strategy for alternative agriculture; small-scale agriculture and environmental quality.
Agriculture and natural resources; production agriculture; socioeconomic.	Alternative crop production and marketing; aquaculture; soil and water management; water quality.
Animal science; entomology; root-crop production; soil and water conservation.	Agribusiness; farming systems; root-crop production; soil and water management.
Family and community development; new horticultural crops; plant and soil science.	Family and community development; rural human resource development; water quality.
Aquaculture and natural resources; human nutrition and health; plant and soil science.	Aquaculture; family economics and well being; human nutrition; plant and soil science.
Caged catfish production; dairy and meat production for goats.	Aquaculture; dairy, meat, and goat livestock production.
Human nutrition; livestock reproduction efficiency; plant and soil sciences.	Conservation crop production; development of scientific and professional expertise; farming systems; human nutrition and health; marketing; soil and water management.
Crop productivity; food nutrition; human resource development; marketing; plant and animal productivity.	Agricultural engineering; animal health and reproductive efficiency; natural resources; soils; water quality.
Dairy goat center for USDA and NASA research; human resources; rural development; water quality and environment.	Food quality and safety; goat production and marketing; water quality and environment.
Biotechnology; rural development.	Family and community development; farming systems; human nutrition and health.
Family living and economic development; plant and animal production and marketing; plant, animal, and human nutrition.	Alternative agriculture for small-scale farmers; curriculum development in soil; products and utilization; rural development; small business; water quality.
Agricultural economics; animal sciences; plant sciences.	Biotechnology; farming systems; ornamental horticulture.
Animal and plant production; food and nutritional sciences; integrated management systems for small-scale farming.	Biotechnology; education; goat management; health; rural youth development; sweetpotato production.
Agronomy; horticulture; rural housing; warm-water aquaculture.	Alternative agriculture for limited-resource farmers; human resources (youth at risk); rural development; warm-water aquaculture.
Food and human nutrition; plant breeding and genetics; poultry nutrition and management.	Closed-loop aquaculture technology for year-round production; education; food science and technology; human development and aging.
Aquaculture; human nutrition and health; plant and animal sciences.	Alternative agriculture for new crops—rape seeds, shiitake mushrooms; aquaculture—freshwater shrimp; effects of air pollution on plants; goat production.

SCS and “1890” Graduates: Of Mutual Benefit

THE NUMBER of black employees in the Soil Conservation Service has increased at varying rates over the years. A few were hired in the 1940's, primarily to work with black landowners. Greater numbers joined SCS following civil rights legislation in the 1960's.

Over the years, many of the blacks who have worked for SCS have been children of landowning black farmers. Blacks have owned farmland in the United States since before the Civil War, although the number increased fairly dramatically toward the end of the 19th century.

Though a distinct minority, some free blacks in the South acquired land before the Civil War. By 1830, some 647 rural free blacks in Virginia had acquired land. On the eve of the Civil War in 1860, there were 1,316 black farmers and rural landholders in Virginia who had property valued at \$369,647. Maryland's rural black landowners numbered 519 in 1830 and 2,124 in 1860.

Despite the financial obstacles and the resistance to selling land

to blacks, they continued to acquire land after the Civil War. Between 1870 and 1890, in the upper Southern States of Kentucky, Maryland, Missouri, and Virginia, the number of black landowners increased from 6,859 to 39,859. One out of three black farmers owned land. In the lower South, where resistance to selling land to blacks was greater, the progress was slower. Usually, less than one out of five black farmers owned land.

A passion for education accompanied the yearning to own land among many of the former slaves. Missionary societies established some of the first colleges for blacks after the Civil War. There were a few private colleges. But the schools called for in 1890 in the second Morrill Act constituted State-supported higher education

for blacks in much of the South, because the first Morrill Act had benefited whites only.

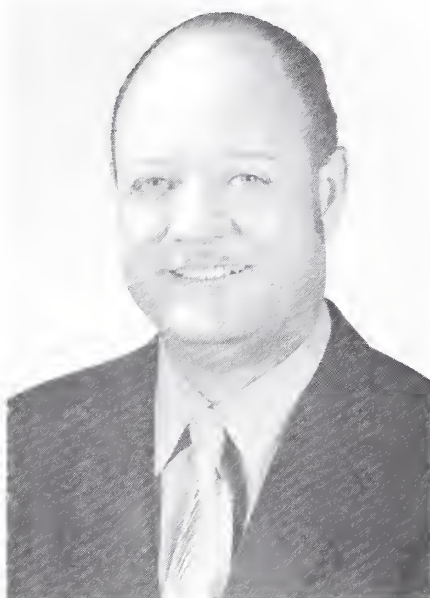
Many of the blacks who have worked in the Soil Conservation Service are products of this environment. They are graduates of the 1890 Institutions and Tuskegee University, children of the landowning farmers.

During the 1940's, SCS hired a limited number of blacks to work in counties with large populations of black landowners. Bishop Holifield held such a position in Florida, as did John Jones in North Carolina, Howard Hardy in South Carolina, and Maurice Godley in Virginia.

In Texas, Richard Moody, a Prairie View A&M graduate, went to work for SCS in Tyler, Tex. In addition to working with black farmers in Smith County, Moody and his staff helped train additional blacks as soil conservationists to work in other parts of Texas. One of the trainees, Floyd Sanders, opened an SCS office at Jefferson, Tex., where his staff assisted black landowners in the Marion-Cass Soil Conservation District.

In 1951, SCS established the first of two offices in Louisiana to work with black farmers. Leon Blankenship and his staff at SCS's Grambling College office worked with hill country farmers on terracing, pasture improvement, woodland development, and farm ponds. Work-unit conservationist Obie Masingale began work in the Delta parishes in January 1952 and helped farmers with landleveling, pasture renovation, and drainage.

The civil rights movement of the 1960's focused attention on secur-



James Hughes became a special assistant on intergroup relations at SCS national headquarters in 1963 to spearhead SCS efforts to hire more minorities. (SCS photo.)

Many...blacks who have worked in the Soil Conservation Service are...graduates of the 1890 Institutions and Tuskegee University...[and are] children of landowning farmers.

ing the fundamental right to vote for all Americans and ending segregation. The Federal Government began emphasizing equal opportunity in employment and equal access to Government services.

The establishment of the President's Committee on Equal Employment Opportunity in 1961 spurred Federal agencies to hire additional qualified blacks. SCS in Tennessee and North Carolina signed up a few trainees from "1890" universities in 1963. Also in 1963, James Hughes, from Tennessee, became special assistant on intergroup relations at SCS national headquarters.

In response to the Civil Rights Act of 1964, SCS closed segregated offices and moved swiftly to eliminate segregation in work assignments, which had been deemed discriminatory.

A 1965 policy stated that "SCS personnel who are members of minority groups are not to be restricted to working solely with minority group landowners and operators." Furthermore, "SCS minority group employees will meet with district governing bodies in their regular meetings."

The United States Commission on Civil Rights issued a report in 1965 on the programs of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Of 6,100 SCS employees in 16 States in the South, the Commission found that 40 were black and only about half were in job categories considered professional.

SCS's strategy to hire more black professionals included signing up student trainees to work in the summer. The students could



John W. Young, right, SCS work group conservationist, records data on dairy cattle and feed to use in preparing a conservation plan for farmer Leonard Bean, of Homer, N.Y. (SCS 1966 photo.)

determine if this was the type of career they wanted, and could tailor college courses accordingly. The number of SCS student trainees increased in the years immediately following the Civil Rights Act, from 9 in 1965 to an estimated 60 in 1968.

SCS also hired "1890" university professors for the summer to familiarize them with the agency's work. SCS hoped the professors would incorporate their newly gained knowledge in the next year's courses and encourage students to undertake careers with SCS.

During the 1960's, SCS staff met with college presidents and officials and urged them to increase course offerings in soil science, one of the main requirements for qualifying as a soil conservationist.

With the prospect of employment by SCS and other agencies and the option of additional courses in agricultural fields, enrollment in agricultural degree pro-

grams increased. For example, the 1965 freshman class at Florida A&M included 40 students in the School of Agriculture—twice the enrollment in 1964.

How much or how little progress has been made toward fulfilling the promise of equal opportunity in both the Federal Government and society can be debated. The graduates from the 1890 Institutions and Tuskegee University who joined SCS in the 1960's have now spent more than 20 years with the agency. During that time, they have served at practically all levels in SCS.

More importantly, the racial makeup of the corps of soil conservationists in SCS is far different than it was on the eve of the civil rights movement.

Douglas Helms, national historian, SCS, Washington, D.C.

"In those early years, our district conservationist really got things going with the university."

SCS Part of A Southern Tradition

"OKAY...SIX POINT two...that's a fill!" shouts Lynwood Abbott, as he looks through his self-leveling instrument and waves to rod man Henry Bell, Jr.

Abbott and Bell, soil conservation technicians at SCS field offices in Denham Springs and Amite, La., have just finished another part of the precision-land-grading project at Southern University.

Located in Baton Rouge, Southern is one of the land-grant schools collectively called the 1890 Institutions and Tuskegee University.

With Soil Conservation Service and Capital Soil & Water Conservation District assistance, Southern University has established a soil

and water conservation tradition.

"A close association began in the late 1960's," said Horace Austin, SCS State conservationist. Since then, SCS and the district have worked closely with Southern in many endeavors.

"In those early years, our district conservationist really got things going with the university," added Alex Bartus, district chairman. "That groundwork led to a plan of conservation practices to improve the [Lab] farm."

The Lab Farm, a several-hundred-acre area a few miles north of the campus, was in dire need of help because of drainage and erosion problems. SCS and the district helped the university's "Ag" department plan and install a drainage system and several ponds for aquaculture.

"Now, we've become increasingly progressive and innovative," said Bobby Phills, College of Agriculture and Home Economics dean at the university. "We've precision-land-graded almost 30 acres; installed four large, erosion-control

structures; and updated the drainage plan for the Lab Farm."

In 1986, Randolph Joseph, Jr., became the USDA "1890" liaison to the university. He has further improved SCS-university cooperation.

Black History Month celebrations, recruitment activities, Food Security Act meetings, magazine features about this "1890" school, and small-farm symposiums have been accomplished with university and State extension service assistance.

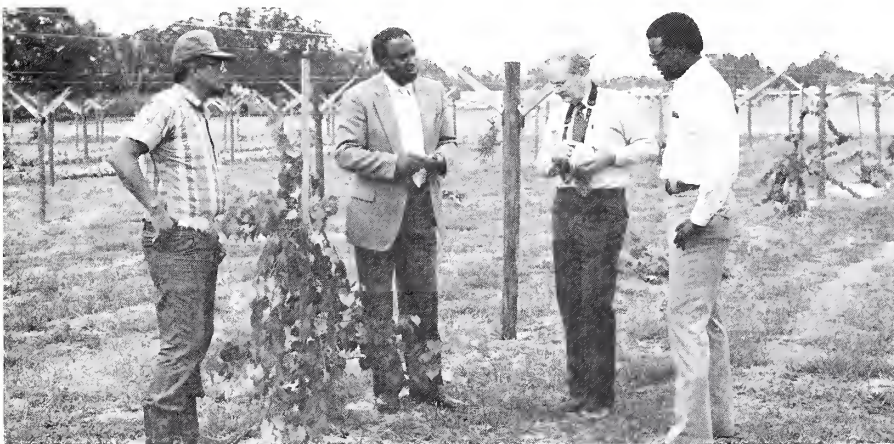
SCS has had a cooperative-education agreement with Southern since 1977. Over 40 students have participated by working for SCS during summers. This experience helped many qualify for permanent appointments in agricultural work nationwide.

SCS helped extensively in the university's Beginning Agriculture Youth Opportunity Unit (BAYOU) program that reviews available food and fiber industry career opportunities and reaches high-caliber youths at a formative age.

In the future will be "Operation Small Farm," a plan to improve research capabilities of the university, especially the "Ag" department, with the focus on small-scale farm research.

The cooperative, productive relationship between SCS and Southern University has become a tradition. Phills sums it up the best: "SCS has truly demonstrated, in a very meaningful manner, the essence of partnership which serves as the foundation for the land-grant mission."

Herb Bourque, public affairs specialist, SCS, Alexandria, La.



Muscadine grapes are grown on this Southern University research farm at Baton Rouge, La. From left: Owusu Bandele and Bobby Phills, both Southern University staff members; Earl Manning, *Progressive Farmer* Midsouth editor; and Randolph Joseph, Jr., USDA "1890" liaison, discuss Operation Small Farm, a new research program at the university. (SCS photo.)

"If it wasn't for this effort, limited resource farmers within...10 counties stood a chance of being out of compliance," Harris added. "Now they won't be."

Virginia Awareness Effort Is A Success

THE SOIL Conservation Service staff is excited about results of an awareness effort targeted at limited-resource farmers that its Richmond, Va., State office initiated with the Virginia State University Cooperative Extension Service (VCES).

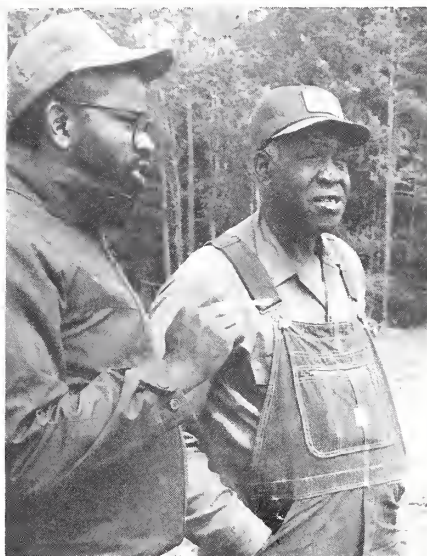
Eighty-seven percent of the 1,600 farmers targeted were contacted, and 80 percent of those contacted—mostly new U.S. Department of Agriculture program users—now have a conservation plan.

Virginia State University (VSU), in Petersburg, Va., is one of the land-grant schools collectively called the 1890 Institutions and Tuskegee University.

South-central Virginia was chosen because these farmers were not fully aware of how the conservation provisions of the 1985 Food Security Act would affect their operations. An awareness campaign would help them avoid losing their USDA farm benefits.

In 1987, SCS asked VCES to lead this effort. SCS provided VCES a \$200,000 grant and a soil conservationist, Barry Harris, as a liaison (located at VSU).

VCES worked with USDA agencies to compile a list of 1,600 farmers in 10 counties—Amelia,



Barry Harris, left, SCS soil conservationist, explains the procedures for installing sod waterways to Blaine Barrett, a Charlotte County farmer. Barrett's farm is one of 12 demonstration sites used in an awareness effort in south-central Virginia. (Photo by Sylvia Hicks.)

Brunswick, Buckingham, Charlotte, Cumberland, Halifax, Lunenburg, Mecklenburg, Nottoway, and Prince Edward—who needed to be contacted because they had taken little advantage of USDA programs.

VCES decided to establish demonstration sites for the Soil Conservation Awareness Demonstration effort in these counties, beginning in February 1988. VCES hired and trained 11 part-time technicians to provide one-on-one support to farmers.

The technicians explained conservation provisions of the farm bill, stressed how farmers could lose future USDA benefits if compliance was not met, and told farmers where to get assistance.

Suggested conservation practices included cover and green manure crops, terraces, filter strips,

waste management systems, crop residue, strip cropping, buffer-strip cropping, grassed waterways, and no-till cultivation.

"Farmers were still reluctant about changing their cropping systems," Harris said. "But we hope the 12 demonstration sites will help show farmers that conservation does work. Most of the demonstration sites consist of low-input, low-maintenance types of conservation practices which reduce cost to the farmer."

Joseph Brown, a Mecklenburg County farmer, rotates corn, soybeans, and small grain, and has four grassed waterways.

According to Boyce Harvey, SCS district conservationist, Brown was one of the most eager farmers he contacted about letting SCS use his farm as a demonstration site.

"I appreciate all the help SCS has given me. I couldn't have done this without them," Brown said.

Lorenza Lyons, VCES assistant administrator at Virginia State University, indicated that the effort's success was the one-on-one contact that catered to the farmer's needs. Technicians visited when it was convenient for the farmers, which was not always between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m.

"If it wasn't for this effort, limited-resource farmers within the 10 counties stood a chance of being out of compliance," Harris added. "Now they won't be."

SCS's Virginia State office wants to use the data from this effort to do a socioeconomic profile of limited-resource farmers in their State.

Kim M. Berry-Brown, contributing editor, *Soil & Water Conservation News*, SCS, Washington, D.C.

Johnson sold over \$1,000 worth of produce grown on only one-half acre of land.

Alabama Projects in Vanguard

ALABAMA A&M University was 2 years ahead of its time. In fall 1984, it launched demonstration projects on four farms in northern Alabama to show the worth of soil and water conservation practices for erosion control and economic benefit.

Located at Normal, Ala., the university is one of the historically black land-grant schools collectively called the 1890 Institutions and Tuskegee University.

In 1986 the university met with other "1890" schools and with the Soil Conservation Service to focus on better assisting limited-resource farmers and ranchers. (They are sometimes also small-scale and/or minority farmers.) Among other partnership agreements was one to encourage demonstration projects.

Because of its early start, by 1986 the Alabama A&M demonstration projects on selected Madison, Cullman, and Marion County farms were already showing positive results—reduced soil erosion and increased crop yields. Nearby farmers could see the benefits of integrating conservation measures into their farming systems.

"At first, project farmers were reluctant to try new things," said McArthur Floyd, associate dean of research at Alabama A&M. "Now



Ram Bishnoi, left, of Alabama A&M University, and contractor discuss terracing and changes to alternative crops of sweetpotatoes, raspberries, and blackberries with Woodrow Manley, right, farm owner in Madison County, Ala. (SCS photo.)

they're staunch supporters who spread the word."

The demonstration projects sought to: show alternative conservation measures for prevailing farming systems; evaluate whether nearby producers would apply such conservation measures; and educate northern Alabama farmers about sound farming systems.

SCS and local soil and water conservation districts assisted the Extension Service at the university through a Resources Conservation Act working agreement.

Collectively, these specialists helped project farmers repair old terraces and build new terraces and grassed waterways. Farmers began no-till planting and contouring, and they planted "alternative" crops such as vegetables and small fruits.

"On Woodrow Manley's farm in Madison County, terraces installed significantly reduced erosion," said Floyd. "Manley's income increased nearly one-third after changing to sweetpotatoes, raspberries, and blackberries."

On his Cullman County farm, Clyde Johnson "got results as never before." Johnson sold over

\$1,000 worth of produce grown on only one-half acre of land. He no-till planted sweetpotatoes and cow peas alternately, and contour-planted okra.

Demonstration projects alone cannot change the agricultural face of Alabama overnight. They are very effective—while maintained. Northern Alabama farmers who lack initial resources to practice conservation farming may find it difficult to stay committed without continued technical and financial support. But the agricultural face is changing, slowly but surely.

"Demonstration projects are a start," said Ernest Todd, SCS State conservationist. "Conservation awareness is raised in communities near demonstration projects. Other farmers see the results and change their systems."

"And better communication now exists between limited-resource producers, researchers, extension agents, and SCS personnel," Todd added.

Maxine H. Barron, program analyst, SCS, Washington, D.C.

...80 percent of [Kentucky] farmers are... limited-resource producers. [They] farm on hilly, highly erodible lands.

SCS Assists Research In Kentucky

THE SOIL Conservation Service is providing natural resource expertise to assist the water quality research component of Kentucky State University's Land-Grant Program. Located at Frankfort, Kentucky State is one of the land-grant schools collectively called the 1890 Institutions and Tuskegee University.

In Kentucky, an estimated 80 percent of the farmers are classified as limited-resource producers. Many operate small farms on hilly, highly erodible lands.

USDA program eligibility is limited now for these persons by conservation provisions of the 1985 Food Security Act that discourage agricultural production on highly erodible lands.

SCS is contributing to Kentucky

State's efforts to (1) educate limited-resource farmers, through the university's Small Farm Program, on how to incorporate soil and water conservation practices into farm management plans; (2) assist producers in more fully utilizing their land's resources; and (3) improve the producer's net income.

The water quality program includes an erosion study, a watershed study, and on-site demonstrations. Plot studies on the university's research farm are designed to determine erosion comparisons from surface and subsurface waters on a highly erodible, north-central Kentucky vegetable agroecosystem.

Pumpkins and green bell peppers are scheduled for planting in May 1990 under three different erosion-management schemes: grass filter strips between the rows, plastic mulch between the rows, and no mulch.

Integrated pest management practices will be used. Soil and water samples will show what happened to applied herbicides, insecticides, and fungicides.

Nutrient losses will be studied. Soil sediment volume, particle size, and organic carbon content will be measured.

These plot studies should increase understanding of sediment, nutrient, and other chemical losses to surface runoff and subsurface drainage. The studies compare losses from different cropping systems using varied management strategies.

Such plots can also demonstrate conservation farming practices. Interested producers and other people will view growth results on plots, attend seminars, and see videotapes.

Data gathered will also contribute to the university's Integrated Whole Farm Watershed Experiment, a 50-acre site containing pastureland, row crops, vegetable crops, and aquatic ecosystems. SCS and the U.S. Geological Survey contributed to the development of the watershed study. Best management practices are being used in the watershed.

The watershed serves as an excellent extension demonstration facility since it typifies small-farm agriculture in this part of Kentucky. This "1890" university is dedicated to serving the needs of the limited-resource farmer and protecting Kentucky's environment.

Matthew E. Byers, principal investigator of the water quality project; **Robert Barney**, associate research director; **Mac R. Stone**, farm manager; and **Marion Simon**, small farm extension specialist, Kentucky State University-Community Research Service, Frankfort, Ky.



When the May 1990 Kentucky State University plot-study plantings of green bell peppers become fully grown (as these are, left), more will be known about which erosion-management scheme is preferable when planting this alternative crop in Kentucky. (Kentucky State University photo.)

"To help such farmers, we need to talk with them face to face...we need to speak their language..."

Maryland, SCS Study "Average" Farmer

HIS AVERAGE age is 58. His average educational level is 10th grade. And he's lived in his home county an average of 52 years.

He's typically a "he" and a black landowner. He's usually retired from nonfarm employment and apt to be a part-time farmer now.

He's the "average" limited-resource farmer in the Southeastern United States, as determined by a 1988 University of Maryland—Eastern Shore (UMES) study. And he's traditionally reluctant to take the first steps toward participating in U.S. Department of Agriculture programs.

Located in Princess Anne, Md., UMES is one of the land-grant schools collectively called the 1890 Institutions and Tuskegee University. The Soil Conservation Service enlisted UMES research assistance to study potential impacts of the 1985 Food Security Act (FSA) conservation provisions on limited-resource farmers.

By defining, describing, and characterizing the "average" limited-resource farmer, UMES is helping SCS and other USDA agencies to target and adapt their communi-

cation efforts toward such producers.

UMES researchers randomly sampled 1,390 farmers and 29 SCS district conservationists in 29 counties in Alabama, Florida, Maryland, North Carolina, and Texas. For study purposes, investigators defined a limited-resource producer as one who farms 50 acres or less and has a total annual household income of less than \$25,000.

Of the farmers studied, two-thirds were black, one-third were white, and a few were Hispanic. About 80 percent were male. About 80 percent were limited-resource farmers, by definition; and almost all were landowners. Average farm size was 33 acres.

Only one-quarter of the farmers studied had conservation plans. Almost all plans were prepared before FSA enactment and are not current with FSA farming restrictions on highly erodible lands. The remaining farmers had no plans, and only 23 percent of them had ever heard of a conservation plan.

Nearly half the farmers studied had never received FSA information from SCS. The informed half had learned of SCS and FSA mostly through reading printed materials that they rated as "easy" to "somewhat easy" to understand. Less frequently did they visit Federal agencies, and much less frequently did SCS district conservationists visit them.

To reach limited-resource farmers more effectively, UMES recommended (1) hiring paraprofessionals with similar racial and ethnic characteristics as the targeted cli-

entele; (2) making personal visits to these producers; (3) hiring older staff members (perhaps semi-retired local farmers) to visit these older, limited-resource farmers; and (4) using volunteers.

"Farmers like these sampled generally don't rely on radio and television for agricultural information," said James Tatum, SCS national technology transfer manager. "They consider agricultural publications too technical. Often, they get all their information by word of mouth."

District conservationists can be that word-of-mouth link between the impersonality of USDA national mandates, such as "swampbuster" and highly erodible lands, and the limited-resource farmers in their counties, Tatum noted.

"To help such farmers, we need to talk with them face to face," said Tatum. "And we need to speak their language—or explain our language more simply or uniformly."

"What USDA calls 'highly erodible land,' the limited-resource farmer may think of simply as 'roughland.' What we call 'swamp-land,' people in some communities call a slough, a bog, or a low place."

Tatum summarized: "The operative points in the UMES study are: talk with...face to face...in their language...with simplified information...and emphasize that our service is free."

Sarah Laurent, writer-editor, SCS, Washington, D.C., and **Paul G. DuMont**, associate editor, *Soil & Water Conservation News*, SCS, Washington, D.C.

Florida Plays "Simon Says"

What does it take to deliver the message to limited-resource farmers about retaining their eligibility for U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) benefits? Combine a local spokesperson who is well-known and respected with a unique and unconventional delivery approach, and you have a formula for success.

In Florida, the Soil Conservation Service and Florida A&M Univer-

sity succeeded with just such an effort.

When Simon Britt, a well-known farmer and landowner, agreed to be the spokesperson for an information campaign to reach limited-resource farmers, the "Simon Says" campaign was off and running.

"Simon Says" posters and radio spots were produced. They reminded farmers of USDA compliance deadlines. Local newspapers and radio and television stations cooperated by featuring "Simon Says" spots as part of their agricultural programs and public service announcements.

To further get the message across, a slide show was produced

featuring Britt talking to farmers about implementing their conservation plans.

SCS district conservationists use the slide show at public meetings to reach farmers with the importance of compliance.

A little imagination—a new twist on an old game—is at work in Florida helping to keep limited-resource farmers eligible for USDA benefits.

Virginia Hungerford, assistant State conservationist for public affairs, SCS, Gainesville, Fla., and **Dick Balduzzi**, assistant State conservationist for operations management, SCS, Gainesville, Fla.

SCS-Alcorn Partnership

One of the actions that followed enactment of the Food Security Act of 1985 was a partnership agreement between Alcorn State University and the Soil Conservation Service to help limited-resource farmers in Mississippi.

Alcorn, located in Lorman, Miss., is one of the historically

black land-grant schools collectively called the 1890 Institutions and Tuskegee University. Limited-resource farmers are sometimes also small-scale and/or minority farmers.

Commencing in April 1989, Alcorn and SCS researchers began gathering specific crop management data on erosion rates. This can help SCS suggest improved cropping systems to fruit, vegetable, and other speciality-crop farmers suffering excessive topsoil losses.

The 3-year study initially involves a thorough literature search to assemble data on cover crops and on their management. Information will be translated into factor values. Subfactor values will be determined and assigned to calculate soil loss rates.

Final information and suggestions will be given to land-grant institutions, Federal and State agencies, farm organizations, and limited-resource producers in Mississippi and in other States.

Moving?

Send present mailing label and new
address including zip code to:

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Soil Conservation Service
P.O. Box 2890, Room 6002-S
Washington, D.C. 20013-2890

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PERMIT NO. G-267

Official Business
Penalty for private use, \$300

Conservation Calendar

July	8-12	The Seventh Symposium on Coastal and Ocean Management, Long Beach, Calif.
	12	Ag Tech '90, Blacksburg, Va.
	12-14	Izaak Walton League of America National Convention, Syracuse, N.Y.
	14-17	International Agricultural Communicators in Education (ACE) Meeting, Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minn.
	21-25	Western Pacific Geophysics Meeting, American Geophysical Union, Kanazawa, Japan
	24-28	Society of Nutrition Education Meeting, Anaheim, Calif.
	27-30	American Soybean Association Convention, Milwaukee, Wis.
	29-Aug. 1	Soil and Water Conservation Society Annual Meeting, Salt Lake City, Utah
	30-Aug. 2	62nd National Institute on Cooperative Education, St. Paul, Minn.
August	3-5	"Organic Agriculture: Sowing the Seeds for a New Decade," Natural Organic Farmers Association, Amherst, Mass.
	5-11	XIX International Union of Forestry Research Organizations World Congress, Montreal, Canada
	6-10	Rural Sociology Meeting, 1890 Centennial Celebration, Norfolk, Va.
	7-9	National Agricultural Research and Extension Users Advisory Board Meeting, Blacksburg, Va.
	12-15	CONSERV 90, The National Conference and Exposition, Phoenix, Ariz.
	15-18	National Sustainable Agriculture, Natural Resources Conference, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, Nebr.
	30	Enactment of Second Morrill Act Celebration, Lincoln, Mo.
September	10-13	Association of Official Analytical Chemists (AOACA) Annual International Meeting and Exposition, New Orleans, La.
	12-14	Global Environmental Solutions Conference & Exposition, Santa Clara, Calif.
	25-26	Experiment Station Committee on Organization and Policy Meeting, St. Louis, Mo.
October	3-4	Great Lakes Commission Annual Meeting, Erie, Pa.
	14-18	Association of State Dam Safety Officials National Conference, New Orleans, La.
	16	World Food Day, Washington, D.C.
	22	Annual Meeting of the American Society of Agronomy, Crop Science Society of America, and Soil Science Society of America, San Antonio, Tex.
	28-Nov. 1	1990 National Irrigation Symposium & Irrigation Association Exposition, American Society of Agricultural Engineers, Phoenix, Ariz.